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**Our Man in the Kremlin**

# Penkovsky on Last Arrival in Moscow Knew Soviet Net Was Closing on Him

*Tenth in a Series*

By Frank Gibney

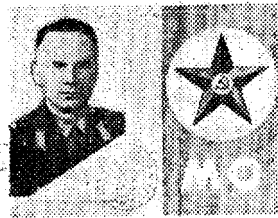
"I am under observation," Col. Penkovsky said, when his British businessman contact, Greville Wynne, arrived in Moscow for what proved to be his last visit before Penkovsky's arrest. It was July, 1962.

Penkovsky had continued to produce tremendous quantities of information for American and British intelligence, but by now he was considering means of making his escape.

He still could not be sure what the State Security Police suspected, but he realized that a net of surveillance was tightening around him.

A less bold or zealous man would have curtailed his activities. But Penkovsky knew the extent of Khrushchev's build-up in missiles, as well as his continued plans for military provocations over Berlin. He sacrificed caution, in his effort to get his warning across to Washington and London.

Wynne brought Penkovsky letters from his contacts in the West, which improved his spirits. Western intelligence officers had forged a new passport for Penkovsky to use, within the Soviet Union, in case surveillance increased to the danger point. He had previously discussed the possibility of leaving Moscow for Leningrad and somehow making a rendezvous with a submarine in



the Baltic. However far-fetched the plan seemed, he was also thinking of some way to get his family out, as well.

On the fourth of July, 1962, Penkovsky attended a reception at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, where he apparently succeeded in turning over information on the Soviet missile build-up to U.S. officers. On July 5, he and Wynne had a last meeting, at dinner, at the Peking Restaurant in Moscow. There they ran into the most obvious kind of surveillance by the State Security.

Penkovsky wrote down this account of the event, after it happened. "On approaching the Peking I noticed surveillance of Wynne. I decided to go away without approaching him. Then I became afraid that he might have some return material for me before his departure from Moscow. I decided to enter the restaurant and to have dinner with Wynne in plain sight of everyone.

"Entering the vestibule I saw that Wynne was 'surrounded' (and that surveillance was either a demonstrative or an inept one).

Having seen that there were no free tables, I decided to leave, knowing that Wynne would follow me. I only wanted to find out if he had material for me and then to part with him until morning, having told him that I would see him off. I went 100-150 meters beyond into a large, through courtyard with a garden. Wynne followed me, and the two of us immediately saw the two detectives following us. Exchanging a few words, we separated.

"I was very indignant about this insolence, and on the following day, I reported officially to my superiors that State Security workers had prevented me from dining with a foreigner whom we respect, have known for a long time, with whom we have relations of mutual trust, with whom I have been working for a long time, etc. I said that our guest felt uncomfortable when he saw that he was being tendered such 'attention.'

"My superiors agreed with me that this was a disgrace, and Levin (the State Security representative) was equally indignant about the surveillance. Levin said that the Committee and I as its representative, granted the necessary courtesies to Wynne and that 'we' (State Security) do not have any claims on him. . ."

Penkovsky's cool-headed bluff bought him time—almost three months' worth. He continued to photograph secret documents in the Gen-

eral Staff library, relying on his good connections in Soviet military circles to hold off further action by the State Security police.

Later, the Moscow press strenuously attempted to play down Penkovsky's influence and associations with Soviet generals and marshals.

Izvestia, for example, called him "... a rank and file official whose contacts and acquaintances did not go beyond a limited circle of restaurant habitués, drunkards and philanders. . ."

How true this characterization was may be gauged from the Papers themselves, a record of which the regime was, of course, ignorant. In the following excerpt, Penkovsky describes one of the many intimate gatherings at which he hobnobbed with the Kremlin hierarchy: Marshal Varentsov's birthday party in September, 1961.

**By Oleg Penkovsky**

Marshal Varentsov's birth-

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day party was held in my country home. Many guests were invited, including the minister of defense, Marshal Malinovsky. My whole family, including even my mother, was invited long in advance. Yekaterina Karpovna, Varentsov's wife, asked me to be the master of ceremonies (temadan).

On the evening of September 16, 1961, the guests began to arrive: Marshal Malinovsky with his wife; Churayev, Khrushchev's right-hand man in the Central Committee Bureau for the Russian Republic (R. S. F. S. R.); Lieutenant Ryabchikov; Major General Semenov, and many others.

All the military were in civilian clothes with the exception of Malinovsky, who came wearing his uniform. Some of those invited could not come because they were busy, many of them out of town on business trips. They most important guests, of course, were Malinovsky and Churayev. Both arrived in Chaikas (the largest Soviet luxury car).

Malinovsky presented Varentsov with a large (3-liter) bottle of champagne. Churayev gave him a large wooden carved eagle, someone even gave Sergey Sergeyevich a black dog. The best and the most original presents were those from me and my family.

They were the things I had bought in London. Varentsov openly admitted it by declaring loudly: "My boy has really outdone himself this time!" And my presents went from one guest to another. Everyone asked where and how I managed to get such beautiful things. Mrs. Varentsov and my wife quietly explained to the guests about my latest trip to London. The answer was always the same: "Oh, well, that of course explains it."

#### Mother's Question

At some point, while the party was in full swing, my mother approached Malinovsky and out of a clear sky asked him: "Forgive me, an old woman, Comrade Minister, my dear Rodion Yakovlevich, tell me please will there be a war? This question worries all of us so much!"

Marshal Malinovsky answered her in these words:



**VARENTSOV'S FRIEND**—The spy, right, then an artillery major, when he served as an aide to Marshall Varentsov, center, in 1944. He remained a confidante of Varentsov's who after the war became marshal of the tactical missile force.

sky also had a special security force.

There was a great deal of drinking. Churayev, in particular, was drinking heavily. He approached me several times during the party asking me to buy him some Chanel No. 5, Arpege, and other perfumes for his wife if I went on another temporary duty trip abroad. Other guests asked me to buy them razors, batteries. Some of the generals wanted attache cases. At first I wrote these things down, but later I simply said I would try to get them.

Later, Churayev began to brag about having 20,000 roses and other flowers at his country house, as well as having various small structures, etc., there. I thought to myself: "What a louse, he has 20,000 roses while ordinary people are starving."

At the same time he told us about the unrest among the people in a small town between the towns of Mineralnaye Vody and Grozny in the northern Caucasus. Things had gotten so bad there that several militia men had been killed. A sim-

ilar incident had occurred in the city of Aleksandrov near Moscow, where the local population had attacked some militamen and members of the MVD. He also told about the city of Murom, where during a strike the militia had fired on the crowds; several people were killed and many were wounded.

When Varentsov tried to stop Churayev, the latter would not listen to him. Churayev went on to tell us about a large hunger riot that had taken place in Ivanovo, where approximately 400 people attacked the militia.

According to him this was a real hunger riot. The people demanded that they be supplied the same food as people in Moscow and asked, "Why is it that they have almost everything in Moscow, while we here have nothing. In Moscow and Leningrad one can fill his stomach somehow, while here we and our families are starving." The militia began to drive the crowd away from the Party oblast committee and the oblast executive committee.

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Then the crowd attacked the militia, and the shooting began. The militia men aimed at the ground near the feet of the crowd in order to scare the people and make them disperse. There was a great scramble, and many were arrested.

The oblast Party committee secretary came out on a balcony and tried to quiet the crowd. The people booed him and would not listen to him. The militia then once more opened fire on the crowd but were unable to disperse it. At this point troops were called out in support of the militia. They did not fire and just pushed the people with their own bodies and rifles, and finally drove the crowd away.

The food situation in the country remains extremely serious. There is much dissatisfaction. Street holdups, burglaries, and murders are frequent. Furthermore, there have been more instances of people attacking the militia. Those who attack the militia are not hooligans; they are ordinary citizens who want to vent their anger on somebody representing the government.

Finally Churayev started telling other guests at the party how the Central Committee employees wrangle with each other, how much drinking and gambling takes place among them, how they chase after women. Sergey Sergeyevich took him by the arm and led him outside to get some fresh air.

So, there is Churayev, an "authoritative" representative of the Central Committee: 20,000 roses, a Chaika limousine, two maids, a personal chauffeur, an apartment in Moscow, his own country house in the outskirts of Moscow, a gambler, a drunkard, and a blabber. But he is on the Central Committee. It is impossible to touch him because he is next to Khrushchev.

I cannot remain indifferent to this. I myself have a fairly comfortable life; my pay is about ten times that of an ordinary laborer, but

what can I do alone? I simply do not know how to help my people.

Perhaps this attitude of mine has already been detected by others. I do not care, I am even glad if this is true. After all, one has to stop and think; today the people are venting their anger on the militia, but tomorrow, who knows, they may start doing this to those who are dressed well, who are fed well, to such persons as Churayev, perhaps to me, because I, too, wear civilian clothes.

Condensed from the forthcoming book, "The Penkovsky Papers," © 1965, Doubleday & Co., Inc.

*THURSDAY: Penkovsky successfully gets Wynne out of Moscow; His disclosures on the Soviet nuclear buildup, and why Khrushchev broke the test ban in 1961.*